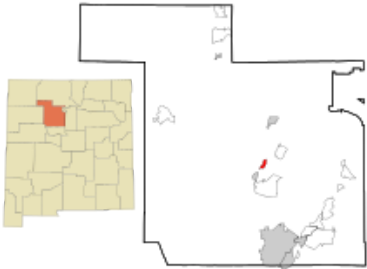


# Jemez language

**Jemez** (also **Towa**) is a Tanoan language spoken by the Jemez Pueblo people in New Mexico. It has no common written form, as tribal rules do not allow the language to be transcribed; linguists describing the language use the Americanist phonetic notation.<sup>[3]</sup>

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Jemez	
<i>Towa</i>	
<b>Native to</b>	United States
<b>Region</b>	New Mexico
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Jemez Pueblo
<b>Native speakers</b>	3,000 <span> </span> (2007) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Language family</b>	Tanoan <div>▪<span> </span>Jemez</div>
Language codes	
<b>ISO 639-3</b>	tow
<b>Glottolog</b>	jeme1245 <span> </span> (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/jeme1245) <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Linguasphere</b>	64-CBA-a
<div></div> <div>Towa language distribution in the State of New Mexico</div>	

## Demographics

Its speakers are mainly farmers and craftsmen. The language is only spoken in Jemez Pueblo, New Mexico, but as 90% of the tribal Jemez members do speak it, it is not considered to be extremely endangered. It was also spoken at Pecos Pueblo until the 19th century, when the remaining members of that community moved to Jemez.

## Phonology

### Consonants

Consonants that are in parenthesis occur only in limited occasion determined by phonological rules. [f] and [ɾ] occur only in loan words.

		<u>Labial</u>	<u>Labiodental</u>	<u>Alveolar</u>	<u>Alveopalatal</u>	<u>Palatal</u>	<u>Velar</u>			<u>Glottal</u>
							<u>plain</u>	<u>palatalized</u>	<u>labialized</u>	
<u>Nasal</u>	<u>voiced</u>	/m/		/n/						
	<u>glottalized</u>	(/ʔm/)		(/ʔn/)						
<u>Stop</u>	<u>voiced</u>	/b/		/d/	(/d͡ʒ/)		/g/	/gʲ/		
	<u>voiceless</u>	/p/		/t/		/tʲ/			/kʷ/	/ʔ/
	<u>aspirated</u>			(/tʰ/)	(/t͡ʃʰ/)		/kʰ/	/kʰʲ/		
	<u>ejective</u>	/pʰ/		/tʰ/	(/t͡ʃʰ/)		/kʰ/	/kʰʲ/		
<u>Fricative</u>	<u>voiced</u>		/v/	/z/						/h/
	<u>voiceless</u>	/ɸ/	/f/	/s/	/ʃ/					/h/
<u>Lateral</u>	<u>voiced</u>			/l/						
	<u>voiceless</u>			(/ɬ/)						
	<u>glottalized</u>			(/ʔl/)						
<u>Flap</u>				/ɾ/						
<u>Glide</u>	<u>central</u>					/j/			/w/	
	<u>glottalized</u>					(/ʔj/)			(/ʔw/)	

## Vowels

The following chart shows the distinctive vowel phonemes in Jemez:

	<u>front</u>		<u>central</u>		<u>back</u>	
	<u>short</u>	<u>long</u>	<u>short</u>	<u>long</u>	<u>short</u>	<u>long</u>
<u>high</u>	i ĭ	iː ĭː	ɨ ɨ̃	ɨː ɨ̃ː		
<u>mid</u>	e	eː			o ɔ̃	oː ɔ̃ː
<u>low</u>	æ æ̃	æː æ̃ː			ɑ̃	ɑ̃ː

All but /e/ can occur as short nasal and long nasal vowels. Central vowel sounds /ɨ ɨ̃/ can also be realized as back vowel sounds [ɯ ɯ̃]. This gives a total of twenty-two distinctive vowel sounds. Note that vowel length is only contrastive in the first syllable of a word<sup>[4]:26</sup> and other syllables' vowels are measurably shorter<sup>[4]:29</sup>

## Tone

Jemez has four tones: High, Falling, Mid, and Low. Word-initial syllables only have high or falling tone; other syllables have mid or low tones (though some syllables that follow a high tone also have high tone). Typically tri-syllabic words have tone patterns such as HHL, HML, HLM, HLL, and FLM.<sup>[4]:26</sup>

Some loan words do break these rules however, such as the Spanish loans for *coffee*, *horse*, and *orange*. These words have a high tone and contrastive vowel length in the second syllable, while the first syllable carries low tone.<sup>[4]:26</sup>

Jemez high tones are similar to those of Mandarin Chinese, except there's a characteristic slight rise at the end. Voiced consonants tend to lower the onset of pitch in high tones. If there are several high tones in a row, the pitch also tends to rise throughout.<sup>[4]:27, 31</sup> Falling tones fall from the level of high to mid pitch.<sup>[4]:27</sup>

For compound nouns or verbs with noun incorporation, the second element loses its word-initial prominence: high tone becomes mid or low tone and vowel length distinction is lost.<sup>[4]:32</sup>

## Syllable structure

Jemez allows for the following syllable structures: V, VV, CV, CVV, CVC, CVVC. Of these, CV and CVV are the most common.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Morphology

### Verbs

In Jemez the makeup of verbs is:

Prefix complex – incorporated adverb – incorporated noun – verb stem – tense marker – subordinating particle.

The following example is one where all possible components in a verb are present.

ʎnópenqʔ níí hhéda uwóókənuhaasəhɣɥlʔe.  
ʎ -nópenqʔ níí hhéda u -wóó-kənʔu-haasə -hɣɥl-ʔe.  
1sD-know 1s neg 1s-really-dog -bite(pass) -FUT - NOM  
I know that I will not be bitten by a dog.

The only case in which the rule of a verb having to have a prefix and verb stem does not apply is in the case of negative imperatives where the verbal stem is not present. The prefix in Jemez is more than just an agreement system. The prefix functions the same as an independent pronoun and with it, a verb is a full sentence. The prefix in Jemez can agree with up to three nominals. The detailed explanation for how this prefix agreement system works was too complicated for me to understand. What I did take from it is that basically it all boils down to the class of the noun, whether it is singular, dual, or plural and to what kind of sentence it is, whether it is transitive, or intransitive. Another additional factor is if there is possession. These factors will then decide what prefix will be used.<sup>[6]</sup>

### Verb types

There are four types of verbs in Jemez. These are categorized by two different factors, transitivity and stativity. To be transitive a verb must have both an active and passive form, which means that it can take the transitive prefix or the intransitive prefix, depending on if it is being used in an active sentence or a passive. Verbs that are classified as intransitive do not have passive forms and occur with only an intransitive prefix.

Following this division into transitive and intransitive there is a further division in these classes based on stativity. This divides them into active and stative verbs. Active verbs are found to have multiple different inflections, for example, perfective and imperfective, different than stative verbs, which have only one. The four categories are: transitive active, transitive stative, intransitive active, and intransitive stative.<sup>[5]</sup>

### Nouns

Jemez nouns use an elaborate number-based classification system and take on an inflectional suffix. The demonstrative then used is dependent on the number and class of nouns.

Noun stems are in most cases made up of a single root, a root and a suffix, or more than one root. In general, a noun stem will contain from one to three syllables; out of these disyllabic are most common.<sup>[4]:26</sup> The majority of noun roots can occur freely, though there are some noun roots that are bound.

There are three main methods by which nouns are derived from verbs: tone change, suffixation, and compounding. While the first two are fairly straightforward, the latter appears in different forms, such as noun+verb or noun+noun. The compounds consisting of noun and verb can be either noun+verb or verb+noun. A more complex compounding pattern occurs in some words such as outdoor oven, [[bread+bake]+enclosure] or [[noun+verb]+noun].

The languages of the Tanoan family have three numbers – singular, dual, and plural – and exhibit an unusual system of marking number, called "inverse number" (or *number toggling*). In this scheme, every countable noun has what might be called its "inherent" or "expected" numbers, and is unmarked for these. When a noun appears in an "inverse" (atypical) number, it is inflected to mark this. Therefore, Jemez nouns take the ending *-sh* to denote an inverse number; there are four noun classes which inflect for number as follows:

class	description	singular	dual	plural
I	animate nouns	-	- <i>sh</i>	- <i>sh</i>
II	some inanimate nouns	- <i>sh</i>	- <i>sh</i>	-
III	other inanimate nouns	-	- <i>sh</i>	-
IV	mass (non-countable) nouns	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)

As can be seen, class-I nouns are inherently singular, class-II nouns are inherently plural, and class-III nouns are inherently singular or plural. Class-IV nouns cannot be counted and are never marked with *-sh*.<sup>[5][7]</sup> The table below gives examples of each class that can take the *-sh* suffix, and illustrates the effect it has on their meanings:

Class	Jemez	English	Jemez <i>-sh</i>	English
I	<i>tyó</i>	'a girl'	<i>tyósh</i>	'girls'
	<i>séé</i>	'eagle'	<i>séésh</i>	'eagles'
II	<i>hhú</i>	'at least three cedars'	<i>hhúsh</i>	'one or two cedars'
	<i>hwúúy'a</i>	'at least three weeds'	<i>hwúúy'ash</i>	'one or two weeds'
III	<i>pá</i>	'one, or at least three flowers'	<i>pásh</i>	'two flowers'
	<i>dééde</i>	'one, or at least three shirts'	<i>déédesh</i>	'two shirts'

## Noun adjectives

The Jemez language does not have adjectives like those one usually thinks of in English or other languages. The function of “adjectives” is carried out in the Jemez language mainly by stative verbs, and also by a smaller group of words labeled “noun adjectives”. This smaller group of words is syntactically nouns; they are not inflected as a verb would be, but semantically they are adjectives. These noun adjectives can, like other nouns in Jemez, take the inverse marker, and they can also compound with other nouns, another typical characteristic for Jemez nouns. Examples of words in this noun adjective category are the words meaning big, small, blind, and old.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Pronouns

The first-person singular pronoun is always *nǎǎ*. For the first-person dual and plural there are two different types of forms: one is inclusive, the other exclusive. The exclusive first person is “*nǎǎsh*”. In respect to “*nǎǎ*”, it was observed by Robert Sprout that speakers are not very casual in usage of *-sh*/ as in other cases, though it is possible to use “*nǎǎ*” for dual or plural. The inclusive first person plural is forms are “*ʔúú*” and “*ʔúúsh*”, the latter being reported as being probably viewed as more formal though both were heard.

Second-person pronouns are singular: “*ʔúwa*” and “*ʔúmi*” or “*ʔúmish*” dual and plural. According to Robert Sprout, his teachers taught him that “*ʔúmi*” is for dual, two people and “*ʔúmish*” for three or more people, but that in actual practice the usage is not strictly divided; he reports that he observed that “*ʔúmi*” was often used plural, and more rarely “*ʔúmish*” for dual.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Exclusive vs. inclusive

The inclusive and exclusive are used to show the relationship between the two speakers, in relation to the topic at hand. The inclusive would put the speaker and his interlocutor, or person being spoken to in the same group, or something that is sometimes known as “in-group”. And so conversely if using the exclusive, it shows that they are an outsider. An example illustrating this given by Robert Sprout in his doctoral dissertation is if there are two men speak Jemez fluently, one a Jemez man and the other a person who is Anglo, but also speaks Jemez. In this case if the man was talking about a broad subject, like the problems humanity faces, the group would be every human being, so in this case the inclusive “*ʔúúsh*” would be used since they both belong to the same group. Continuing with this example, if one changes the topic to the problems faced by members pertaining to Native Americans or even more specific, members of just the Jemez nation, then the Jemez man would use “*nǎǎsh*”, because they would no longer be members of the same group.

While it does show the relationship of the speaker to the person being spoken to, it is not simply used to express an already defined relationship, but can also be used to express changes in this relationship, depending on how the speaker is perceiving or wants the relationship to be perceived by the person who he is speaking to as well as other people. Continuing with the example given by Spratt, if the Jemez man wished to insist that the Anglo was not an outsider to the Jemez then he might use the inclusive "ʔúúsh". Also if this man was being taught how to be Jemez, then in that case "ʔúúsh" would carry the additional meaning of an exhortation to meet the expectations held. In this case it shows how the choice in pronoun can be used to show unity, and the opposite can also be true. The example given is: "Say I'm on a baseball team and we have a game. One of our good players doesn't show up for the game, but we play without him and we win anyway. Later I run into him and he asks me about the game, "Did we win ("ʔúúsh") win?" I say to him, "Yeah, we ("nǐúsh") won," and that cuts him out and puts him down."<sup>[6]</sup>

## Determiners

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In the Jemez language there exist 3rd person pronouns but these serve other functions as well, adopting different characteristics depending on usage. Almost all determiners can function as independent pronouns, demonstratives or noun modifiers. They are similar to nouns in that they can take on the inverse number marker. Further more when acting as independent pronouns they take the same class as what they are referring to.

Determiners in the Jemez language are broken down into three groups. The divisions among these groups are distinguished by the meaning they show in relation to space of the speaker with the noun accompanying the determiner.

The first class of determiner is one that is only used with nouns that are in sight and easily accessible to the speaker, this accessibility seems to be directly related to effort that must be put in to reach the noun and distance to the speaker. The determiner used is dependent on the form of the noun. Determiners that are used when in plain noun form are: "núú", "núúdæ", "núútʔæ" and "hnhú". The determiners applied to nouns in the inverse forms are: "núúdæsh" and "núútʔæsh". Breaking the determiners into another division is possible based on usage, determiners "núúdæ" and "núúdæsh" tend to be used when the determiner is followed by a noun. When it is not, instead playing the role of an independent pronoun, in that case being the noun phrase, then "núútʔæ" "núútʔæsh" are a possibility, along with "núúdæ" and "núúdæsh". It is important to make note that there are differences between speakers.

When a determiner combines with a noun there are different rules depending on the class of the noun, these rules explain under what situations what will or can take the inverse suffix, whether it will be the determiner, noun, or both. For Class I nouns, there is an overall tendency or "rule" that the noun has to take this inverse suffix. That is the only requirement for it to be acceptable; it is possible to have two inverse suffixes, one on the determiner and one on the noun. The only scenario not acceptable being that where the noun did not have this inverse suffix but the determiner did. "núúdæsh véélesh" – These men "núúdæ véélesh" – These men "núúdæsh vééle" – These men – Not acceptable

This is not applicable to Class II or Class III nouns. For these two classes the pattern is different, the insistence of the noun having to take an inverse suffix is gone and instead we see that as long as either the determiner or the noun takes an inverse it is fine, but if both take the –sh inverse suffix, it is reported as being "too much".

The second type of determiner category we do only have one determiner, "nǎǎ". This determiner is used to show that the noun is in sight of the speaker but "not really accessible to him." (spratt) This determiner though used to show this meaning is not used every time that this is the special relation between noun and speaker because its usage is limited to only nouns in the basic form. When it is the case that the noun is in its inverse form than "nǎǎ" is replaced with "núúdæsh". The determiner "nǎǎ" can, like other determiners, also be used as an independent pronoun, though there is a slight change; instead of "nǎǎ" it becomes "nǎʔǎ", something like this also having been observed to happen in the first determiner category.

The third category of determiners shows a relation between speaker and noun where it is not about distance but instead line of sight, these determiners being used when the noun is out of sight regardless of distance. The three determiners belonging to this category are "doo", "dosh" and "ʔoo". Again as in the other two determiner categories there is a distinction between when used as an independent pronoun or a determiner. For "doo" and "dosh" the independent pronoun form is "doʔo" and "doʔsh", but for "ʔoo" this is not the case as it is an exception among all the determiners that is not used a pronoun. Besides it not being used as a pronoun, "ʔoo" also has the special characteristic of only being used with animate objects, mainly human, as Spratt says "it can sometimes be applied to non-human animates, but with a great deal of hesitation and some reluctance". Another restriction that is pointed out by a speaker mentioned as one of Spratt's Jemez teachers is that they feel that the pronoun would not be used when mentioning the person for the first time, only after you have already mentioned them could you use it.

# Revitalization

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In 2006, the leadership of Pueblo of Jemez noticed a language shift and established a 10-person team of speakers, elders, and educators to study language use and develop strategies for language revival. Through interviews, the tribe determined the fluency rate was 80% among tribal members. The Jemez Language Program developed an early childhood immersion program and Jemez language curriculum for kindergarten through 8th grade. They also hosted Jemez Education Retreats.<sup>[8]</sup>

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## External links

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- Jemez Language Program ([http://www.jemezpuablo.org/Jemez\\_Language\\_Program.aspx](http://www.jemezpuablo.org/Jemez_Language_Program.aspx))
- Pueblo of Jemez (<http://www.jemezpuablo.org>), official website
- Towa (Jemez) language at native-languages.org (<http://www.native-languages.org/towa.htm>)
- Pecos Pueblos resources (<http://www.fourdir.com/pecos.htm>)

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